

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-13

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 DRC-01 /107 W

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R 151700Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2516

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 1033

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, GR

SUBJECT: FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER AVEROFF'S CONCRETE PROPOSAL TO
PRESIDENT GHIZIKIS FOR A RETURN TO DEMOCRATIC NORMALCY

1. SUMMARY. ON FEBRUARY 13 FORMER FONMIN AVEROFF GAVE ME
SUMMARY OF A LETTER HE DELIVERED TO PRESIDENT GHIZIKIS ON
FEBRUARY 2. THE LETTER REVIEWS THE PRESENT SITUATION AND THEN
PROPOSES IN CONCRETE TERMS A BRIDGE FROM THE PRESENT REGIME TO
CONSTITUTIONAL AND REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT WITH A NUMBER OF
PROVISIONS DESIGNED TO ALLAY CONCERN OF THE MILITARY THAT A
RETURN TO DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT WOULD THREATEN REALIZATION OF
THEIR VIEW OF DESIRABLE GREEK POLITICAL GOALS. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING IS SUMMARY:

A) PRAISES REGIME FOR ELIMINATING RETIRED MILITARY FROM
ADMINISTRATION IN ALL MINISTRIES AND GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS;
PRAISES ITS HANDLING OF THE SENSITIVE CHURCH PROBLEM EMBODIED IN
THE PERSON OF IERONYMOS; SALUTES THE REESTABLISHMENT OF THE
COUNCIL TO DESIGNATE NOMARCHS; APPROVES REGIME'S PROPOSED ACTION
AGAINST CORRUPTION, PROVIDED IT IS IMPARTIAL.

B) DESCRIBES PRESENT SITUATION AS EXTREMELY DANGEROUS AFTER SIX
YEARS OF DICTATORSHIP; COUNTRY AND PEOPLE ANXIOUS ABOUT FUTURE;
PEOPLE PARTICULARLY OFFENDED BY PAPADOPOULOS PLEBISCITE AND

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CONSTITUTION DESTRUCTIVE OF DEMOCRACY; ORIGINAL PROMISE OF APRIL
21, 1967 BECAME ONLY A VIOLATED PARENTHESIS. THIS SITUATION IS

BASIS OF ALL OPPOSITION WHICH PEOPLE THEMSELVES OPENLY CANNOT EXPRESS; PRESS MUZZLED AS NEVER BEFORE EXCEPT DURING THE NAZI OCCUPATION AND CERTAIN PHASES OF THE CIVIL WAR; SILENCE DOES NOT MEAN THERE IS NO PSYCHOLOGICAL UPHEAVAL--AFTER SIX YEARS OF EXPECTATION IT IS UNACCEPTABLE AND DANGEROUS TO TELL PEOPLE THAT ONLY A FEW INDIVIDUALS ARE CAPABLE OF MAKING ALL BASIC DECISIONS AFFECTING THE GREEK PEOPLE. PROOF OF THIS ATTITUDE SHOWN BY POPULAR RELIEF AFTER COUP OF NOVEMBER 25 AND OPTIMISM AND RENEWAL OF LOVE AND RESPECT FOR THE ARMED FORCES.

C) NOW PEOPLE CONVINCED THAT FIRM EFFORT IN COURSE TO IMPOSE FOR MANY YEARS A NON-DEMOCRATIC REGIME SUSTAINED AND SUPPORTED BY THE ARMED FORCES. THIS REPRESENTS AN EXTREME DANGER FOR GREEK ARMED FORCES, AS WELL AS GREEK INTERNAL AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY. IN THIS CONTEXT HOVEST AND GOOD INTENTIONS ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE OF NO IMPORTANCE SINCE IMAGE REMAINS OF AN OLIGARCHY GOVERNING GREECE. THE PRESTIGE OF THE ARMED FORCES HAS NEVER BEEN SO LOW SINCE GREEK INDEPENDENCE ACHIEVED, WITH THE CONSEQUENCE THAT OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE ARMED FORCES RARELY APPEAR IN PUBLIC IN UNIFORM.

D) YOUTH ALSO AFFECTED BY PRESENT SITUATION. YOUTH NOW MARCHES WITH WHOMEVER AGAINST THE REGIME, AND UNFORTUNATELY WITH FORCES NOT ALWAYS SOUND. COMMUNIST PARTY IS MORE ACTIVE THAN EVER. GREECE IS SLIPPING TOWARDS THE LEFT--TOWARDS ANARCHISTIC THINKING. ACTIVITIES OF THE GREEK COMMUNISTS ABROAD ARE INTENSE: FOR EXAMPLE, TWO COMMUNIST GROUPS OPERATING IN GERMANY.

E) THE ECONOMIC SITUATION HAS BECOME SERIOUS AND DANGEROUS (BECAUSE OF MONEY POLICIES, E.G. ARTIFICIAL PRICE CONTROL, OVER-EXPANSION AND SERIOUS EXTERNAL FACTORS); IT DIRECTLY AFFECTS PERSONS WITH FIXED INCOMES.

F) EVEN MORE DANGEROUS FOR THE REGIME IS THE PSYCHOLOGY AFFECTING THE PEOPLE. PEOPLE HAVE NO CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT, AND PEOPLE EVERYWHERE FEAR THE UNCERTAINTIES. ATTITUDE OF PEOPLE REFLECTED IN FACT THAT WHILE MANY COMPETENT PEOPLE WERE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN PRESENT GOVERNMENT TVEY HAVE GENERALLY REFUSED, NOTWITHSTANDING HIGHLY PATRIOTIC SENTIMENTS.

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G) PRESENT REGIME ISOLATING GREECE FROM EXTERNAL WORLD AND WEST. GREECE ORGANICALLY BELONGS TO THE CIVILIZATION OF THE WEST, NOT AFRICA AND THE ARAB WORLD AS SOME OF THE LEADING EXPONENTS OF THE REGIME BELIEVE (E.G. D. IOANNIDES).

H) IF TODAY A NEW POLYTECHNION EPISODE OCCURS, NOT 15,000 BUT 100,000 PEOPLE WILL JOIN. IN A FEW MONTHS IT WILL REACH 500,000. A SMALL ORGANIZED AND EXTREMIST MINORITY WILL BE IN THE MIDDLE SEEKING TO EXPLOIT SITUATION. THIS IS A FACT OF PRIMARY

IMPORTANCE COMPARABLE TO THE INDUSTRIAL POSITION OF THE COUNTRY
AND THE COMMON MARKET.

I) SITUATION IS EVOLVING TOWARDS A CATASTROPHE--A CATASTROPHE
FROM WHICH THERE WILL BE NO POINT OF RETURN, WITH PROBABILITY OF
GREECE SUFFERING ONE OR MORE LATIN AMERICAN-TYPE EXPERIENCES.

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 ATHENS 1033

3. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND AVEROFF PROPOSED HIS "BRIDGE" PLAN FOR
ESCAPING FROM THE IMPASSE, COMPOSED OF FOLLOWING:

A) PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC TO PICK A PERSON WHO COULD BE A
RETIRED OFFICER, TECHNOCRAT, OR OLD POLITICIAN TO ACT AS PRIME
MINISTER. BEFORE HE FORMS A GOVERNMENT HE WILL PRESENT PROGRAM ON
TV AND RADIO. IN THIS WAY HE COULD ATTRACT THE NECESSARY DEGREE
OF COMPETENCY.

B) THE PROGRAM IN ITS ESSENCE WOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE
BEYOND MINOR VARIATIONS.

1) ARMED FORCES THROUGH THE PRESIDENT CHARGE THE PRIME MINISTER
TO RETURN COUNTRY TO DEMOCRATIC NORMALITY. THIS WOULD RECREATE
HIGH REGARD FOR ARMED FORCES IN THE COUNTRY.

2) GOVERNMENT WILL INCLUDE MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND PUBLIC ORDER
FROM RETIRED OFFICERS AVAILABLE.

3) GOVERNMENT WILL EXPLAIN THAT RETURN TO NORMAL DEMOCRATIC LIFE IS NOT A MATTER OF DAYS BUT NEITHER IS IT A MATTER OF AN INDEFINITE PERIOD. THERE WILL BE A DEFINITE AND FIXED PERIOD.

4) WITHIN 15 DAYS A LAW ON FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IS TO BE PUBLISHED--A LIBERAL LAW ALLOWING TRUTH AND OBJECTIVE CRITICISM BUT NO LIES NOR IRRESPONSIBILITY.

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5) WITHIN THREE MONTHS ALL MUNICIPALITIES' MAYORS TO BE REPLACED. NO ELECTIONS ARE POSSIBLE WITH THE PERSONS APPOINTED BY THE OLD REGIME. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO HAVE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS BEFORE GENERAL ELECTIONS BECAUSE SOME COMMUNISTS MIGHT BE ELECTED. IN MEANTIME OFFICIALS WOULD BE PICKED BY THE COURTS. LOCAL AUTHORITIES SUCH AS DIRECTORS OF AGRICULTURAL BANK, COOPERATIVES WOULD BE REQUESTED TO PREPARE CATALOG OF RESPECTABLE PERSONS IN THEIR DISTRICTS. ONLY PERSONS HONORABLY DISCHARGED FROM THE ARMY WOULD BE ELIGIBLE (TO BAR COMMUNISTS).

6) WHEN NEW PEOPLE IN CHARGE, JUDGES WOULD TAKE PLACE OF NOMARCHS FOR A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. MARTIAL LAW WOULD BE LIFTED; ELECTORAL LAW PUBLISHED, BASED UPON A SYSTEM OF REINFORCED PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION AND PRINCIPAL OF RELATED PARTIES. (PRIOR TO VOTING, PARTIES WOULD RECOGNIZE VALIDITY OF PRINCIPLES OF OTHER PARTIES; THOSE NOT RECOGNIZED COULD NOT JOIN IN A COALITION AFTER ELECTIONS (TO EXCLUDE COMMUNISTS).

7) ELECTIONS PROCLAIMED TO TAKE PLACE WITHIN TWO MONTHS FOR A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. NO MEMBER OF THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE PART IN THE ELECTION. ALL GREEKS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE EXCEPT THOSE WHO WILLINGLY ASSUME A SECOND NATIONALITY AND MAINTAIN IT FOR 15 YEARS (THIS TO ELIMINATE ANDREAS PAPANDREOU). WORK TO BE COMPLETED IN SIX MONTHS. IF NOT, SPECIALLY APPOINTED COMMITTEE TO COMPLETE. IN THIS CASE, RATIFICATION BY POPULAR VOTE WILB BE REQUIRED. OTHERWISE, ASSEMBLY AUTOMATICALLY BECOMES A PARLIAMENT.

8) PRESIDENT GHIZIKIS REMAINS AS PRESIDENT WHEN NEW GOVERNMENT IS FORMED. IF NEW GOVERNMENT A REPUBLIC, ELECTIONS FOR PRESIDENT TO BE HELD WITHIN THREE TO SIX MONTHS.

9) PROCLAMATION OF NEW PM INVOLVING PROGRAM HAS THREE PURPOSES: (1) PROMISE GOOD ADMINISTRATION OF CURRENT AFFAIRS; (2) ORGANIZE RETURN OF NATION TO NORMALCY; AND (3) FACE ECONOMIC CRISIS.

10) PROCLAMATION ENDS WITH EULOGY OF ARMED FORCES.

11) IF SUCH A PROGRAM ANNOUNCED, REGIME WILL DRAW EXCELLENT COOPERATION WHICH WILL CHANGE THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE PEOPLE AND
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BUILD CONFIDENCE; POSITION OF THE COUNTRY INTERNATIONALLY WILL BE STRENGTHENED; ASSOCIATION WITH COMMON MARKET WILL BECOME AN IMMEDIATE REALITY; U.S. WILL DO THE MAXIMUM TO HELP THE NEW GOVERNMENT BOTH MORALLY AND MATERIALLY.

4. IN A SEPARATE NOTE TO PRESIDENT, AVEROFF SAID HE PREFERRED CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY TO DECIDE DEFINITELY QUESTION OF MONARCHY SINCE UNLIKELY IT WOULD CHANGE REPUBLIC. IF PLEBISCITE FOR MONARCHY HELD, EXTRANEOUSL ELEMENTS WOULD ENTER AND VOTE NOT LIKELY TO BE SUFFICIENTLY DECISIVE ONE WAY OR THE OTHER. AS AN ALTERNATIVE HE OFFERED PRESIDENT CONCEPT OF A REVISING CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WHICH WOULD THEN PRESUMABLY LEAVE REPUBLIC INTACT. (MONARCHY A SENSITIVE ISSUE WITH MILITARY.)

5. IN REPLY TO MY INQUIRY AVEROFF TOLD ME HIS PROPOSAL IS BEING CIRCULATED WITHIN THE MILITARY BY PRESIDENT GHIZIKIS. HE HAS LEARNED FROM TWO HARD LINERS THAT THEY DEEPLY IMPRESSED WITH ITS CONTENTS. IN ADDITION, A CLOSE PROFESSOR FRIEND OF HIS HAS SOUNDED OUT IOANNIDES' BROTHER-IN-LAW WHO AFTER CONSULTING WITH IOANNIDES STATED LATTER CONSIDERED APPROACH "SOUND". AVEROFF SAID WHEN HE LAUNCHED PLAN HE GAVE IT ONE CHANCE IN A HUNDRED OF SUCCESS. HE NOW BELIEVES CHANCES ARE TEN PER CENT.

6. COMMENT: I FIND THE WHOLE EXERCISE INTERESTING BECAUSE (A) PRESIDENT GHIZIKIS ACCEPTED PAPER AND CIRCULATED IT; (B) CONTACTS HAVE BEEN REPORTED BETWEEN AVEROFF AND IOANNIDES WHOM AVEROFF DESCRIBED AS AN "HONEST AND DEDICATED GREEK, ALTHOUGH MISGUIDED;" AND (C) KARAMANLIS IS IN THE ACT AND HAS A COPY OF THE AVEROFF PLAN.
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